



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: May 7, 2008

SUBJECT: Agenda Item XIII: Consideration of resolution authorizing the acquisition of up to two Chevrolet Tahoe SUV hybrid vehicles for long term evaluation and use.

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt a resolution authorizing the acquisition of up to two (2) Chevrolet Tahoe SUV hybrid vehicles for long term evaluation and use.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) operates a fleet of vehicles for agency use. Given the age of our existing fleet, the ever escalating cost of fuel, and the recognition that vehicle use impacts the carbon footprint, the MRCA is exploring the use of alternative vehicles.

Currently only General Motors produces a full size hybrid SUV (Tahoe). The Tahoe hybrid propulsion system will be available in a full size half ton pick-up truck in the 2009 model year (distribution by January 2009). We are proposing the purchase of two hybrid Tahoe vehicles to evaluate the General Motors hybrid propulsion system prior to any purchasing decisions regarding the acquisition of hybrid pick-up trucks.

The Tahoe hybrid vehicles will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Actual monthly fuel savings as compared to non-hybrid vehicles.
Off road performance as compared to non-hybrid vehicles.
Public Safety patrol advantages/disadvantages compared to non-hybrid vehicles.

The vehicles will be issued to the Executive Officer and Chief Ranger for evaluation. Currently the Chief Ranger's assigned vehicle (2001 Expedition) has an odometer reading of 219,000 miles, and averages 11 mpg. In order to maintain the highest

level of supervision for “after hour” wildland fires, law enforcement activities and Search & Rescue calls, the Executive Officer and Chief Ranger are authorized use of their assigned vehicle during non-traditional office hours. In the case of the Chief Ranger, the vehicle is also used in conjunction with his park caretaker duties.

The Tahoe hybrid fuel economy is estimated at 20mpg for both highway and city. The MRCA Finance Division has determined that the monthly estimated fuel savings offset the higher acquisition costs of the hybrid system.

Cost: The per unit vehicle cost (excluding tax, fees, etc.) of the Tahoe hybrid vehicle is not expected to exceed \$55,000. The MRCA Finance Division will determine the best financial arrangements for the acquisition.